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POSTER

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN MINDFULNESS, SELF-COMPASSION, AND DRINKING TO COPE IN UNDERGRADUATES WITH PROBLEMATIC CONSUMPTION

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Undergraduate students show the highest rates of problematic alcohol consumption compared to any other non-clinical category of individuals, and coping-motivated drinking has been consistently shown to be the most problematic.

The present study examines associations between mindfulness facets, self-compassion, and coping-motivated drinking, and how these associations differ by gender. Undergraduate problematic drinkers (N = 146) completed self-report measures assessing their motives for drinking (coping-depression, coping-anxiety, enhancement, social, conformity) and levels of dispositional mindfulness (observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging, non-reactivity) and self-compassion.

Regression analyses revealed that for both genders, mindfulness facets and self-compassion were statistically significantly negatively associated with coping-depression, but not coping-anxiety. Non-judging was uniquely associated with coping-depression in women, but in men, non-reactivity was the sole unique association. Unexpectedly, describing was negatively associated with conformity-motivated drinking in women.

Mindfulness and self-compassion based programs for undergraduate problematic drinkers may be most effective if they target students who drink to cope with depression and emphasize different skills depending on the student's gender. ■